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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/649,921

08/27/2003

Tran M. Nguyen

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EXAMINER

DOUGLAS, JOHN CHRISTOPHER

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1797

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

03/13/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/649,921	Applicant(s) NGUYEN ET AL.	
	Examiner JOHN C. DOUGLAS	Art Unit 1797	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 1/08/2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 11-14, 16-27, 29 and 31-33 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 11 and 21-27 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 12-14, 16-18, 20, 29 and 32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 19, 31 and 33 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 1/08/2008 has been entered.

Response to Amendment

Examiner acknowledges the submission filed on 1/08/2008 containing remarks and amendments to the claims. The rejection is maintained in part:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

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1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

1. Claims 12-14, 16-18, 20, 29, and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crump (US 5389594).
2. With respect to claims 12-14, 16-18, 29, and 32, Crump discloses chelants used in oil drilling that comprise one of citric acid, glyceric acid, gluconic acid, or glycollic acid, such chelants being useful in water. The oil/chelant mixture further comprises sulfuric acid to reduce the pH of the mixture to about 4.2. The amount of chelant in the wash water is about 0.01 to about 40 weight percent and corrosion inhibitors are included in the composition. See Crump, column1, lines 16-27, column 11, lines 57-65, column 13, lines 22-29 and 57-64, column 14, lines 1-14, column 16, and lines 27-50.
3. With respect to claim 20, Crump does not disclose that the composition of the treated crude oil contains more than 10 ppm iron or calcium. However, it would have

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been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to adjust the contact time, the amount of chelant added and to choose a crude oil feed having a high metals content in order to achieve a desired amount of metal content in the crude oil product.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's first argument is that Crump only very generally discloses the prior art chelants and that they may be useful in a long list of applications. Therefore, Applicant argues that the Crump reference does not teach that the chelants of the invention are used in the art of refinery desalters. However, Crump discloses that chelants in general and the chelants of the invention of Crump are useful in oil field operations (see Crump, column 1, lines 16-27 and column 5, lines 40-59) and are thus, useful in treating crude oil. Therefore, it would be obvious to use the chelants of citric acid, glyceric acid, gluconic acid, or glycollic acid in oil field operations, because Crump teaches that chelants are useful the treatment of crude oil.

Also, in response to applicant's argument that that the chelants of Crump are not disclosed as useful in refinery desalting processes, a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 1-9, 11, 21-27 are allowed.
5. Claims 19, 31 and 33 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
6. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the prior art also does not teach a method of transferring metals and/or amines from crude oil to a water phase in a refinery desalting process comprising adding the claimed composition for transferring metals/amines to water, lowering the pH of the water to 6 or below, and adding the water to the crude oil to create an emulsion. The prior art also does not teach the claimed composition comprising the claimed composition for transferring metals/amines, a mineral acid, and a demulsifier in a wash water mixture having a pH of 6 or less.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JOHN C. DOUGLAS whose telephone number is (571)272-1087. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn A. Caldarola can be reached on 571-272-1444. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JCD

3/3/2008

/Glenn A Caldarola/
Acting SPE of Art Unit 1797